

Ford Prepared To Beat Navy Into Flivvers

Acres in Jersey Ready To Be Used for Dry Dockage in Scrapping Warcraft, He Explains to Harding

1,000,000 May Get Jobs

Employment Promised for Legions if Muscle Shoals Bid Is Accepted by U. S.

Special Dispatch to The Tribune

DETROIT, Nov. 19.—Henry Ford, who discussed with the President yesterday his plan for buying and scrapping American war vessels if the armament reduction proposal is adopted, revealed, in an interview to-day with a correspondent of "The Detroit News" just how he expects to improve on the old prophecy of "beating swords into plowshares" by melting battleships into Ford automobiles. He discussed also his plan for converting the Muscle Shoals government nitrate plant into an enterprise that would employ a million men.

"It will be easy," was the comment of the Detroit manufacturer—the problem of scrapping the battleships, after naval experts to whom Secretary of the Navy Denby had referred him had cautioned him that its difficulties might make the enterprise unprofitable.

"They said the ships were very heavy and cumbersome and that the cost of operating a dry dock during the scrapping process might be far too costly," Mr. Ford continued.

"I told them I would build my own dry dock and use it to build merchant ships afterward. I would hang a crane over this dry dock and put railroad tracks alongside of it. It is no trick at all to saw up these great ship plates—all of the steel in a ship, in fact—and melt it up into the finest kind of alloy steel.

"We already have compounded steel in our plant, an inch-thick piece of which required 190,000 pounds pull to break. A similar piece of armor plate steel will withstand only about 60,000 pounds.

Ready to Build Plants

"President Harding suggested that we could not get the battleships to our plants. I pointed out to him that I have an eighty-acre tract on the New Jersey shore and other sites on the coast available for the job, and that we have plants in Manchester and Cork where this steel could be utilized.

"Why, do you know that we picked up enough rough steel scrap rails, old car trucks and the like on the Detroit, Toledo & Ironport Railroad to almost pay for it. We melted most of it up, although some of the rails we shipped up to the upper peninsula for use in our logging and mining operations.

"I am indeed in earnest about the battleships. If they will turn them over to us we will put all of the materials in them to good use and we will employ a whole lot of men tearing them to pieces in the bargain.

"If you stop building battleships and reduce the number of ships in operation you will throw a whole lot of men out of jobs. That is the most serious problem that disarmament presents. The governments have got to find a way to employ these men; that is what I am trying to do also at Muscle Shoals—that is, supply a lot of men with useful employment. Muscle Shoals, fully developed, will itself put 1,000,000 to work."

With Herbert Hoover, Mr. Ford and his engineers discussed the details of the Muscle Shoals project. Mr. Hoover sought to persuade Mr. Ford to increase his offer for the property, but without success. The one important change in the proposal was an offer of Mr. Ford to complete the dams at cost for the government.

Differences Over Estimate

The discussion chiefly revolved around the variations in estimates of the Ford engineers and the army engineers of the cost of completing the work. The Ford estimate is approximately \$40,000,000, whereas the government estimates range as high as \$60,000,000. The difference, however, it is agreed, is largely due to variation in prices of materials and labor at the time the two estimates were made.

Mr. Ford proposed to contribute \$23,000,000 of the work. The remaining \$17,000,000 of the cost, as he estimates it, would be made up to the government by the improvement in navigation of the Tennessee River, which the completion of the dam would effect. On three different occasions the army en-

gineers have approved plans for making the Tennessee navigable for larger vessels at a cost ranging from \$9,500,000 to \$12,000,000, and it is on these estimates that Mr. Ford's plan is based.

Mr. Ford believes that he can complete the work with his own organization at much less cost than the government can do it, and it is for this reason that he has offered to undertake it.

After the conference Mr. Hoover indicated his belief that Secretary Weeks would submit to Congress some definite recommendation regarding Muscle Shoals in the very near future, but he refused to predict just what this recommendation would be. Mr. Ford is the only private offer that the government has received for the property; hence the question appears to be between this offer and a plan for completing the work by government enterprise.

At present the partially completed plant is costing the government \$700,000 a year to maintain. Also navigation of the river is completely stopped. Under these conditions it is apparent that some solution of the problem must be found in the very near future.

400,000 Children in Russia Fed by America

RIGA, Nov. 19 (By The Associated Press).—Despite difficulties resulting from the "unintentional inefficiency and red tape" of the Russian Soviet government, the American Relief Administration is now feeding about 400,000 children in Russia, according to Colonel William N. Haskell, chief of the organization in Russia, who arrived here to-day from Moscow. One of the greatest hindrances to the work is the bad condition of the Russian railways, he said.

Colonel Haskell said the administration expected to reach 1,000,000 starving children by the first of the year, as originally had been planned. He said the administration now was operating 2,000 kitchens in ten provinces and that the organization anticipated feeding 2,000,000 eventually.

Briand Calls to See 'M. Charles,' But It Is Chaplin, Not Hughes

French Premier's Prolonged Absence From Hotel Stirs Reporters Until He Explains He Has Been at Picture Show, Not State Department

By Boyden Sparkes

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19.—Aristide Briand and Admiral de Bon, of the French navy, left the New Willard Hotel this afternoon on what was reported to be a call of importance. It was said that they had gone to see Secretary of State Hughes. The Premier of France carried a cane. The Admiral had shed his gold lace and wore a double-breasted suit of serge.

A few correspondents harried by thoughts of an early Saturday night "dead line" saw them depart. They heard the Premier comment on the magnificent civilian appearance of his dear Admiral. They also heard him say:

"But hurry or we shall be too late for M. Charles."

The elevator door clanged and they were gone. Then some of the more enterprising reporters endeavored to overtake them in the hope of seeing this historical encounter. They were unsuccessful, but there are many entrances to the middle-aged structure that houses the Department of State, so they did not think it strange.

Anxious Hour for Reporters

In the corridor of the French delegation's floor at the New Willard the correspondents began to gather. H.G. Wells was not there. Neither was Arnold Bennett nor Gabrielle d'Annunzio. But there were other writers of the school referred to as "trained seals."

A score or more of ordinary reporters, including a few Chinese, Koreans and Japanese, politely saying "Yes, please, pardon," whenever they were allowed.

An hour passed, and then another. Finally M. Briand and the Admiral returned. The Premier was smiling broadly, and the Admiral, too, wore a pleased expression.

A handful of journalists' cars was carried into the Premier's suite. A secretary protested that there was no rendezvous, but, shrugging his shoulders, the good nature of the Premier was so great that it might be he would consent. After fifteen minutes all were ushered into the circular chamber with green upholstered furniture that serves the head of the French delegation as a reception room.

"You will tell us about your visit to Secretary Hughes this afternoon, Mr. Premier?"

"Ah, but, no, I did not call on the Secretary of State."

"But you went out?"

"Yes, yes, I went out for a walk."

"And did not see Mr. Hughes?"

It is not becoming to grow impatient with the Premier of France, but this was a trying situation.

"No, no, no. We walked, the Admiral and I. We went to a cinema, a movie. We saw Charlie Chaplin. Any other question, gentlemen?"

"Thank you, Mr. Premier, we have no others to-day."

New Basis for Optimism

Now this may not be news, but it justifies the expressions of optimism that came to-day from American, British and French sources alike.

Both French and British spokesmen say:

"Why should we not be optimistic? Everything is moving along excellently."

There is a disposition among the French, however, to question the lengths to which the armament limitation proposals may be extended. They ask how is it possible for a conference of nations to say that science shall not invent new engines of destruction more terrible than those that are to be scrapped. They go further and say that such limitations placed on certain weapons will but serve to stimulate genius to create instruments of death that will be many times as effective as those that are proscribed by international law.

"How can you say 'no' to science?" ask the French. "If a capital ship is sunk by a submarine, what then? It is war. War is war. How are these rules to be enforced when they are made?"

"How are mines to be controlled?" they add. "Many nations had subscribed to an agreement prohibiting the use of poison gas, but they did not reckon with Germany. Science will get busy as soon as the diplomats go home. War is not so easily banished from the earth."

With this talk of wars to come there was mingled to-day a few references to the last one. M. Briand, for example, made more clear his view with regard to France's war debts to the United States.

France Protests Haste

"This indebtedness was contracted in the furtherance of a common purpose," he said. "Should we, therefore, not have time to pay? We should not be hurried."

Although the French cling to a certain amount of cynicism in referring to the conference as a panacea for war, there is none of that in the expressions of the British statesmen

here; and, better still, as the American viewpoint takes on more definite outlines it becomes clear that the British viewpoint is almost parallel to it on matters of armament limitations, excepting only the submarine.

The British spokesmen are firmly convinced that this is a weapon that should be outlawed utterly. The 90,000 tons allowed under the Hughes program they consider altogether too much, and certain of the American naval experts are inclined to agree with them. A naval war in the Pacific, they say, would present almost insuperable problems to the admirals of an American fleet forced to fight near the eastern shores. Japanese submarines could harry the American force, while American submarines would be ineffective so far from a base.

France Expects Briand To Impress Conference

Full Presentation by Premier of Difficulties That the Nation Faces Is Anticipated

Special Cable to The Tribune

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PARIS, Nov. 19.—The eyes of France will turn more than ever toward the Washington conference Monday, when Premier Briand is scheduled to state France's case before the world. It is definitely understood here that France cannot hope for actual alliances for her security, but the country is looking to the Premier to deliver the facts in such a manner that there will not be the slightest doubt as to France's position on naval limitation, and that moral, if not material, benefits can come to France as a result.

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often, both officially and unofficially, recent days that it is believed Briand will have no new facts to offer, but it is the emphasis on the old facts that the French believe is necessary.

Phillies Sign Canadian

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 19.—A left-hand pitcher from London, Ontario, of the Michigan-Ontario Baseball League, has been signed by the Philadelphia Nationals. He will go South with the Phillies on their training trip.

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